

Application Serial No: 10/054,575
Attorney Docket No.: 51951 (23091/10 ACT-164)

REMARKS

Entry of the foregoing, reexamination and reconsideration of the subject matter identified in caption, as amended, in light of the remarks which follow, and further in light of the amendments and remarks presented in the previously filed Amendment, are respectfully requested.

By the foregoing amendments, independent claims 1, 10 and 11 have been revised by pointing out that the opposite side walls of the first connector are "non-parallel to" the front face.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for his time and helpful comments during the telephonic interview of December 17, 2003. At that time, each of the issues raised in the Official Action as well as the amendments and remarks set forth in the previously filed Amendment were discussed. In discussing the art rejections, the Examiner noted that under his reading of the applied documents, the opposite side walls of the first connector would be parallel to the front face. In an effort to expedite prosecution, the claim amendments presented above regarding the sidewalls being non-parallel to the front face were discussed.

Claims 1 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by *Smith et al* (U.S. Patent No. 5,790,733). Claims 1-3, 5, 7, 8, 11-13, 15, 17 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by *Blonder et al* (U.S. Patent No. 5,179,609). In addition, claims 9, 10, 19 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Blonder et al* in view of "prior art disclosed", and claim 16 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Blonder et al* in view of *Smith et al*. These rejections are respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

Neither *Smith et al* nor *Blonder et al*, nor any combination thereof discloses or suggests each feature of the invention as presently claimed. For example, neither *Smith et al* nor *Blonder et al* discloses or fairly suggests a first connector having a front face and opposite side walls extending from and non-parallel to the front face as set forth, for example, in independent claims 1, 10 and 11. The recesses/alignment fiducials of both *Smith et al* and *Blonder et al* used in connection with the alignment spheres are formed in opposing faces of the connectors — the alignment spheres do not engage the opposite

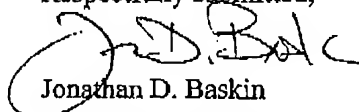
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sidewalls as presently claimed. There is no suggestion in either of the applied documents of such a structure. Accordingly, withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

From the foregoing, further and favorable action in the form of a Notice of Allowance is believed to be next in order, and such action is earnestly solicited.

If there are any questions concerning this paper or the application in general, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned in order to expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,



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